

Rev. Edward Leary

Mystic — The Rev. Edward A. Leary, 76, who served at St. Edmund's Novitiate and Retreat in Mystic, died Tuesday at the Edmundite residence in Englewood, Fla.

He was born on Jan. 6, 1924, in New York City, the son of William and Mary Small Leary. He was a professed member of the Society of St. Edmund for 50 years and ordained for 47 years.

The Rev. Leary graduated in 1946 from St. Michael's College in Colchester, Vt., and also earned a master's degree in English literature and an honorary doctorate in humanities from his alma mater.

He taught English literature at Cardinal Mindszenty High School in Dunkirk, N.Y. (1954-56), St. Michael's College (1956-58) and St. Bernard High School in New London (1958-62).

He served as administrative assistant to the Edmundite superior general from 1962 to 1965. In 1965, he was named pastor of St. Elizabeth Church, the African-American parish in Selma, Ala. He remained pastor until 1971, when the parish was amalgamated with Assumption Church to form Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish. During his tenure as pastor, he also served as local superior of the Edmundite Fathers and Brothers. He also served as medical assistant and chaplain at Good Samaritan Hospital in Selma. In 1976, he became pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish.

The Edmundite General Chapter elected him the 10th superior general of the Society of St. Edmund in June 1978. At the time of his election, the society had 120 professed members (95 priests, 13 brothers and 12 scholastics in training). He was re-elected to a second term in 1982. During his tenure as superior general, he served as chairman of the board of trustees of St. Michael's College.

After serving as superior general, he served at St. Edmund's Novitiate and Retreat in Mystic, where he directed Edmundite novices and retreatants until his retirement in 1995. Since retiring, he had resided at the Edmundite residence in Englewood, Fla.

He is survived by two nephews, Kevin and Brian Leary.

Calling hours will be 7-9 p.m. Sunday with a wake service at 8 p.m. at the Edmundite Memorial Chapel, 1401 Broad St., Selma, Ala. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Monday at Queen of Peace Parish in Selma. Burial will be in Fairlawn Memory Gardens Cemetery in Selma.

A memorial Mass will offered at St. Edmund's Chapel, Enders Island, Mystic, at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 29.

Memorial donations may be made to the institutions to which the Rev. Leary gave during his life, c/o Edmundite Generalate, 270 Winooski Park, Colchester, VT 05439.